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9/14/2020 Applicant Responses
below in red.

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MEMORANDUM

DATE: August 13, 2020
FROM: Cliff Boehmer
TO: Ashley Clark
CC:
RE: PAGES: 2
PROJECT: Walpole Summer Street 40B PROJECT No. 2020038

I'm writing to summarize the points that we reviewed, as well as adding a few additional thoughts that were not discussed or detailed. As I mentioned, I have spent very little time looking at the proposed buildings, so you will notice that most of my comments are related to site planning issues. I look forward to reviewing the proposed buildings once the site plan is finalized.

Please note that "Aesthetic issues concerning building design **can only be raised to extent that aesthetic considerations are imposed on market rate developments by specific regulations**" See discussion in Oceanside Village LLC v. Scituate ZBA under heading of Building Design Issues. As Walpole has no specific regulations regarding aesthetic requirements, the review for aesthetics would be inappropriate, and the applicant should not be charged for such review.

I will also take this opportunity to strongly suggest that the ZBA request a computer-generated 3-D model of the development. This is not an unreasonable request for a development of this scale, and it is the only way that will make it possible for the Board to accurately visualize this proposal. It is evident from the submitted materials that the architect is using a modelling software (my guess is that it's Revit), so the next step is to place all of the buildings on a topographically accurate site plan, add roads, vegetation, etc. With the model, the Board will be able to "walk through" the development and assess the quality of the proposed design(s).

The applicant will update the bird's eye view project rendering previously provided to include proposed changes to the project.

Here is the summary of my thoughts:

1. Overall site plan, particularly in the area of the multi-family buildings is not pedestrian friendly. Partridge Lane is a series of connected parking lots (as opposed to an attractive, landscaped street).
See revised plan dated 9/14/20 (This is referred to as Driveway "C" on plans dated 5/1/20 and subsequent submissions).
2. Sidewalks in area of large buildings follow along the fronts of parked cars, with no area for planting trees between the walks and parked cars.
See revised plan dated 9/14/20 for context and revised layout in multifamily area.
There is minimal space for landscaping between buildings and the sidewalks.
See revised plan dated 9/14/20 for context and revised layout in multifamily area.
3. Headlights from parking cars are directed into ground floor units (with some exception where buildings may be elevated for parking beneath).
The applicants experience and the advice of our property manager is that tenants prefer a design where they can park close to their units or an entrance and walk directly into their unit if it faces the parking lot on the first floor or into a building entrance.

4. Spruce Lane sidewalk on one side only, regularly interrupted by numerous broad driveways.
It is typical for SFH neighborhoods to have a sidewalk on just one side. There is no regulatory requirement for sidewalks on both sides of a driveway. (This is referred to as Driveway "E" on plans dated 5/1/20 and subsequent submissions.)
5. Courtyard defined by three tall buildings is grossly undersized (it is defined by 144 apartments and the clubhouse, with 48 other units nearby). Buildings are crowded together, particularly given their height.
See revised layout dated 9/14/20.
6. Placement of tall buildings chaotic, no obvious organizing element.
See revised layout dated 9/14/20.
7. More than half of all units face parking lots.
See response to comment # 3 above.
8. 3/8 of units in tall buildings face other tall buildings across the undersized open space.
See revised layout dated 9/14/20.
9. Clubhouse location not logical, no connection with usable outdoor space. Crowded onto site.
See revised layout dated 9/14/20.
10. Long stretches of single-loaded parking inefficient, creating additional impervious areas.
See revised layout dated 9/14/20.
11. Number of single family homes sited very near infiltration ponds.
See revised layout dated 9/14/20.
12. Inadequate view corridors to wetland areas between single family home (space between buildings is too tight).
The applicant has considered multiple options for the entire project and feels that the current design is most desirable. In addition, the project is not dense by any reasonable standard and people will appreciate the opportunity to live in the SFH section as designed.
13. Redtail wetland crossing is in a location that creates the need for two large, un-landscaped cul-de-sac's. (This is referred to as Driveway "F" on plans dated 5/1/20 and subsequent submissions.) A grass center has been added to each cul-de-sac as recommended in the work session.
14. 5 homes near site entry point "orphaned" from rest of development.
The market will view the 5 homes as very desirable and they are in the scale of the surrounding neighborhood.
15. Awkward intersection of Spruce, Redtail, and Partridge.
See Bayside Engineering traffic analysis memo dated April 16, 2020
16. Entire site accessed at only one point.
The boulevard design meets NFPA standards.

Some thoughts about potential modifications (some of which are shown on the 7 / 19 /20 Summer Street Sketch):

17. Create variety of parking types (including some under-building if desired), turn Partridge into a true, pedestrian friendly "lane", create building-specific, landscaped satellite parking area to break up huge parking lots (potentially all building-specific spaces assigned to residents), significantly enlarge shared open space, give more space to clubhouse.
See revised layout dated 9/14/20.
18. Add planting strip between curb and parallel parking spaces.
The applicant will not propose parallel parking. See revised plan dated 9/14/20.
19. Narrow down curb cuts at single family homes (create fan-shaped parking areas if multiple cars need to be accommodated).
The applicant has considered multiple options for entire project and feels that the current design is most desirable.
20. Add sidewalks on both sides of all streets.
Some sidewalks were added. See revised layout dated 9/14/20. However, there is no regulatory requirement for sidewalks on both sides of a driveway
21. Potentially move swimming pool to area along railroad tracks.
The applicant's design response to February 2020 Conservation agent comments to the ZBA dated April 30, 2020 precludes the club house being located where suggested by peer review. See revised layout dated 9/14/20.
22. Open up views to wetlands through single family homes. Consider side to side garages to cut down on curb cuts, create more usable open space and improve views.
The applicant has considered multiple options for entire project and feels that the current design is most desirable.

23. Re-shape infiltration ponds to create more distance from homes .
See revised layout dated 9/14/20.
24. Integrate bio-swales in place of some of infiltration pond square feet.
The current design meets stormwater standards.
25. Consider walking trails within 25' no disturb zones.
The applicant will not propose as Wetland and ADA regulations are too prohibitive.
26. Commercial use should be considered at Summer Street entry point.
A commercial use such as a convenience store as suggested by town representatives at the working session would not be appropriate for several reasons:
 - A commercial use would not contribute to the affordable housing stock.
 - Low Traffic volume on Summer Street would not support a convenience of other retail use.
 - Our discussions with the neighbors did not included a commercial option.
27. Create an internal protected bus stop area.
The applicant has spoken to school and bus company officials and were told the buses will enter the site and make several stops within the site to pick up school children. The applicant will check back with school and bus officials prior to construction to agree on appropriate stopping places.
28. Move entry to Balsam Lane to eliminate one cul-de-sac.
A grass center has been added to each cul-de-sac as recommended in the work session.
29. Consider another crossing to make Balsam a loop road, eliminate both cul-de-sacs.
Another crossing is unnecessary and would require additional filling of wetland, be objected to by the Conservation commission and will not be pursued by the applicant.
30. Re-work intersection of three roads.
The driveway intersections are safe and effective as proposed. See onsite traffic analysis memo dated April 16, 2020